



LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS OF ODAWA INDIANS
7500 ODAWA CIRCLE, HARBOR SPRINGS, MI 49740

TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL REPORT NARRATIVE

From: Mel Kiogima

Date: August 11 & 12, 2011

Re: Emerging Tribal Economies

This conference was sponsored by The Seminar Group and held at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme, Michigan.

Presentations were made by a number of notable speakers, including: Kip Ritchie, Potawatomi Business Development Corporation; John Petoskey, Frederick Peebles & Morgan LLP; Gavin Clarkson, University of Houston Law Center; Marvin Adams, National Capital LLC; Lisa McComb, Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc.; and others.

Some of the topics discussed included: SBA 8(a) & Related Federal Contracting Programs; Tribal Entity Formation and Protection; Accessing Capital for Tribal and Individual Enterprises; and others.

Tribal leadership participating in panel discussions included: Larry Romanelli, Little River Band; Jamie Stuck, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Tribes; and, James Crawford, Forest County Potawatomi.

Much of what was presented included activities associated with successful Tribal enterprises throughout Indian Country, including activities of the Northern Shores Loan Fund, Inc., which is a native, non-profit, 501(c)(3) incorporated under the LTBB; Advancia Corporation, an Oklahoma-based Federal contractor and was purchased by the Forest County Potawatomi Tribe in 2006; Osage, LLC, a relatively young company that was created to stimulate the economy of the Osage Nation and to create jobs for Tribal members; and, panel discussions by Tribal leaders that have established successful business enterprises other than gaming.

While much of the discussions delved into the details of various activities, most of which were foreign to someone not working in the business environment on a daily basis, some of the notable thoughts that come to mind are:

- Need community support for economic development;
- For sustainable growth, is the Tribe ready and committed to moving forward with economic diversification and, if so, then a Master Plan for Economic Development is a Must;
- Be transparent with finances;
- Build a team of grant writers;
- Confer with other Tribes so as not to re-invent the wheel;
- Sell your poverty status for 8a projects;
- Be careful of waiving Tribal Sovereign Immunity;
- Don't be afraid to develop businesses on 'trust' lands;
- We want to help other you!;
- And, so much more!

With eight representatives from various Branches, Departments, enterprises, and levels of officialdom from LTBB present, there appears to be some degree of heightened interest in pursuing economic diversification within LTBB. It is this interest that should be captured, assessed, and if decided, plans developed for LTBB to make a commitment to moving forward in the diversification of our economy. With this thought in mind, I would like to bring together the entities that currently are working in, and working on, the various economic endeavors within LTBB.

To this end, I'm proposing the establishment, by statute, of a Tribal Council Economic Development Committee that would be formed similarly to the other Tribal Council committees. One of their primary charges is to take the lead in pursuing economic diversification for LTBB. If LTBB is ready to make this commitment, then sufficient resources must be made available to help bring this commitment to fruition.

Thanks for allowing me to attend this seminar. If LTBB wishes to make a commitment to economic diversification, I would very much like to play a role in bringing this about.